

## **FIRE/EMS Stand Down: Priority Survival Notification - Confined Space and Technical Rescue**

By: [The International Association of Fire Chiefs](#)

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The International Association of Fire Chiefs ([IAFC](#)) through their [Safety, Health and Survival Section](#) are urging all fire chiefs and officers to immediately issue a stand down in their departments due to two separate, but similar confined space rescue incidents that nearly took the lives of several firefighters. During a stand down, personnel are directed to postpone non-emergency tasks to focus on critical safety training.

In addition to federal, state and local laws, the IAFC Safety Health and Survival Section has identified a number of [online resources](#) for fire and emergency service leaders and personnel to use in this stand down and in their ongoing efforts to educate personnel on technical rescue operations.

"In recent weeks, incidents involving confined space rescues in both Ohio and Indiana left initial civilian victims dead and firefighters critically injured," stated Chief Billy Goldfeder, chair of the IAFC Safety, Health and Survival Section. "In both cases, while heroic attempts were made to save the victims, firefighters ended up becoming victims themselves."

During the stand down, chiefs are requested to have all personnel immediately review and discuss applicable departmental policies and procedures to minimize the risk to firefighters in confined space and related technical rescue incidents.

"Confined space and similar technical rescues are high-risk, but low-frequency events," said Chief Jeff Johnson, IAFC president. "The rarer the incident type, the more likely that fire and EMS personnel may be unaware of, unprepared for, or even forget proper procedures as they race to rescue a victim. I urge fire and emergency leaders to immediately take action to review the dangers and proper procedures for confined space rescue operations."

